

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE TRINIDAD CITY COUNCIL
FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ladwig called the teleconference meeting to order at 5:00pm. Council members in attendance: West, Ladwig (present), Davies, Miller, Grover (by phone). City Staff in attendance: City Manager Eli Naffah (by phone), City Clerk Gabriel Adams, Administrative Assistant Angela Zetter (present).

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion (West/Grover) to approve the agenda as submitted. Passed unanimously.

IV. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR – None

(Three (3) minute limit per Speaker unless Council approves request for extended time.)

V. CONSENT AGENDA – No consent agenda.

XI. DISCUSSION/ACTION AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discussion/Decision regarding Moratorium on Short-Term Rental Stays in the City of Trinidad – exempting First Responders and Health Care Workers – until State and County Shelter-In-Place Orders are Lifted.

Mayor Ladwig read the Resolution aloud. He disclosed that although he owns and manages a Short-Term Rental inside the City limits, he 1) honors the Shelter-In-Place order and voluntarily closed down his rental for the duration of the order, and 2) will participate in the meeting but abstain from voting.

Council questions included:

Miller: Why is the Bed & Breakfast not included in the moratorium? It should include all lodging establishments in the City limits. Essential Workers as defined in the State's Shelter-In-Place Order are should be exempt from restrictions.

Davies: I agree with Miller. The moratorium should include the B&B, and the language should "include all lodging in the City that collects T.O.T."

City Manager Naffah explained that he discussed this with County and State Officials, and they both confirmed that Hotels and Inn's are essential businesses.

Public comment included:

Dorothy Cox – Trinidad

I agree with Davies. The B&B should be included. I've seen advertisements for furnished Trinidad rentals requiring 14-day quarantines. Submitted comments by email.

Anita Thompson – Trinidad

Enforcement will be critical. Violators should be fined or have their license suspended. Submitted comments by email.

Shirley Laos – Trinidad Rancheria

The Rancheria declared a Tribal Emergency this week. We intend to use our Seascape House for tribal members and family to shelter in place – not to rent and collect occupancy tax.

Diane Stockness – Trinidad, Planning Commissioner

There are many people visiting the town and the beach. I've received 5 messages and 3 phone calls from concerned residents about this issue. We need more law enforcement patrolling the City, and we need to keep the number of visitors down.

City Manager Naffah noted that the County Sheriff emphasized that the Shelter-In-Place Order is the law, but the intent to enforce is by education first. He also added that alleged violations and or circumstances should be evaluated by the City Manager.

Laura Scott – Trinidad

Be careful not to allow loopholes that may cause exploitation of the “Critical/Essential Worker” definition.

Mike Allison – Trinidad

Oversight and accountability must be communicated to the owners.

Written comments submitted:

Jacques Beaupre – Trinidad

Supports the moratorium. Concerned that Craigslist ads for vacation rentals in Trinidad are threatening community health.

Jan Nash-Hunt – Trinidad

Asked why hotels and B&B are not included.

Midori Fulk – Vacasa, Redwoods General Manager

Acquired Redwood Coast Vacation Rentals in January. Confirmed that Vacasa implemented a global, company-wide shutdown of all it's rentals on March 25, thus cancelling existing and incoming reservations through April 30 and/or until further notice as mandated by the State of CA.

Pat Morales – Trinidad

Asked why Mayor Ladwig has not recused himself from discussions involving STR's.

Susan Tissot – Trinidad

Alerting the City Council of vacation rentals in the area trying to attract people located in “germy” cities to find respite here through Craigslist and Facebook platforms.

Richard Bruce – Trinidad

Thanked the Council for taking up the issue.

Council comments included:

Miller: We need to be able to audit this process, and make violations significant enough to warrant license revocation or suspension for up to one year.

Davies: 1) The moratorium should remain in effect until both the State and County Orders are lifted, 2) there should be no forgiveness - a single violation should result in a license revocation or suspension, and 3) any appeal of a violation determination should be reviewed by the entire Council.

Ladwig: Suggested that the intent could be to make the punitive measures consistent with the current policies listed in the STR Ordinance.

West: County Supervisor Madrone said that the Board of Supervisors are working a similar order for lodging establishments in the County.

Ladwig summarized the suggested changes:

- 1) Amend #1 to include “any business that collects Transient Occupancy Tax”... within the City of Trinidad..., and to exempt individuals deemed by the State as “essential critical infrastructure workers”.
- 2) Amend #2 to include ...”and notification from the City”.
- 3) Include #4, defining enforcement language consistent with the STR Ordinance, emphasizing the penalty for violations resulting in loss of license for up to one year, and appeals of City Manager decisions shall be reviewed by the City Council.

Motion (Davies/Miller) to amend the Moratorium to include the suggested changes, and adopt the revised Resolution 2020-02; Imposing a Moratorium on New Short-Term Rental Reservations During the Shelter-In-Place Order. Passed 4-0-1 (Ladwig abstained).

VI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Miller: Similar discussion regarding long-term rentals

Miller: Consideration of a request made by Humboldt Mutual Aid, advocating for moratoriums on evictions, utility shut-off's, ect.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:15pm

Submitted by:

_____signed copy on file_____

Gabriel Adams
Trinidad City Clerk

Approved by:

_____signed copy on file_____

Steve Ladwig
Mayor